

SPECIAL MEETING NORTH SMITHFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

MAY 5, 2008

KENDALL-DEAN SCHOOL

7:00 P.M.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. and began with the prayer and the pledge to the flag. Council members in attendance were Mr. Keeley, Mr. Leclerc, Mr. Lovett, Mr. Zwolenski and Mrs. Thibault. Town Administrator Lowe and Town Solicitor Hadden were also present.

NATIONAL GRID PRESENTATION RE: INFRASTRUCTURE

Representatives of National Grid provided a power point presentation of a plan to upgrade transmissions throughout southern New England. Transmission system upgrades proposed for North Smithfield, Smithfield, Johnston, Cranston, West Warwick and Warwick involve reconstructing an existing electric utility right-of-way and adding a second 345-kilovolt transmission line in the existing corridor.

This upgrade comes as a result of studies conducted by ISO New England Inc., National Grid and ISO. Several reasons were given for the transmission project including:

- To meet peak demand
- To preserve reliability when major elements of the electric system are out of service

- To avoid equipment overloads or low voltage conditions
- To enhance competitive electric markets
- To enable the most cost-efficient electricity to be delivered to customers
- Aging infrastructure
- To support critical services and infrastructure such as hospitals, schools, emergency response, water, sewer and traffic lights

The investment in North Smithfield is approximately \$65 million that will result in additional revenue to the town.

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Permits and approvals will be required from ISO New England, RI Energy Facilities Siting Board, RI Public Utilities Commission, US Army Corps of Engineers and RI Department of Environmental Management as well as local departments.

The National Grid representatives expect construction to begin in 2010 and the facilities should be in service in late 2012.

FORMATION OF NORTH SMITHFIELD REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY

With specific reference to Branch River, Mr. Scott Gibbs of New England Economic Development explained there needs to be an organization to make the project happen and oversee legal issues.

An ordinance would be needed to create the agency and by-laws would need to be established. Without a redevelopment agency, the town would have to turn to the Planning Board or a private non-profit agency.

Mr. Zwolenski and several other Council members felt that safeguards would need to be in place.

It was agreed to move forward with the idea.

1ST READING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT RE: TAX PAYMENTS – INSTALLMENTS

Finance Director Jill Gemma noted there were several reasons to change the dates for tax collection. They included continuity of dates to the fifteenth of each collection month, simplifying the business registration and license process in November, and time to process more up-to-date reports for the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Mr. Lowe noted the town had received numerous complaints from people trying to register their vehicles.

Mr. Leclerc questioned the last paragraph that addressed computation of interest and Mrs. Gemma agreed that needed to be more explicit.

MOTION by Mr. Lovett, seconded by Mr. Keeley, and voted

unanimously on an aye vote to accept the ordinance as a first reading.

MOTION by Mr. Lovett, seconded by Mr. Keeley, and voted unanimously on an aye vote to have the second reading on May 19, 2008.

MAIN STREET SEWER CONNECTION – J. MARTEL

Attorney Mark Krieger explained that James and Jean Martel purchased their two-family property at 129-131 Main Street in 2003. This property included a new septic system that had been installed in 1999 with a life expectancy of 20 to 30 years. The Martels had never been informed of the Silver Pines development and the installation of sewer lines down Main Street.

Mr. Martel recently received a registered letter from the town demanding dismantling of their septic system and connection into the town's public sewer system at a cost of \$5,200 per unit. Business has been slow for Mr. Martel and payment of this fee would be a hardship for him.

Mr. Martel also learned that his sewer line location was installed on the far left side of his property and that would require him to excavate his driveway causing an additional expense.

Mr. and Mrs. Martel appeared before the Sewer Commission on April

16, 2008 with two proposed options. One was to be allowed to continue to use their fairly new septic system in lieu of connection to the town system. Their second option was to treat the two-family as a one-family for connection purposes only, allowing them to connect for \$5,200 instead of \$10,400. The Sewer Commission unanimously voted to deny the request.

Mr. Lowe noted the public works department could work with the Martels to change the sewer line from the left side to the right side of their property.

MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski and seconded by Mr. Leclerc to treat the Martel property as a single family dwelling so they can connect for a \$5,200 fee due to mitigating history.

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Roll call vote: Mr. Keeley – no; Mr. Leclerc – yes; Mr. Lovett – no; Mr. Zwolenski – yes; Mrs. Thibault – no. The motion failed 3 to 2.

MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski and seconded by Mr. Leclerc to authorize the Town Administrator to move the sewer connection from the left side to the right side of the property.

The **MOTION** was amended by Mr. Zwolenski, the second was amended by Mr. Leclerc, and it was voted unanimously on an aye vote to authorize the Town Administrator to place a lateral on the

opposite side of the Martel house to facilitate a sewer connection.

MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Mr. Leclerc, and voted unanimously on an aye vote to extend the time frame for the Martels to make the sewer connection for six months from the time the lateral is installed. The fee will be for the full \$10,400.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

MOTION by Mr. Lovett, seconded by Mr. Keeley, and voted unanimously on an aye vote to enter into executive session at 8:55 P.M. pursuant to RIGL 42-46-5(A)(5) Any discussions or considerations related to the acquisition or lease of real property for public purposes, or of the disposition of publicly held property wherein advanced public information would be detrimental to the interest of the public.

MOTION by Mr. Lovett, seconded by Mr. Keeley, and voted unanimously on an aye vote to come out of executive session at 9:12 P.M. and to seal the minutes. No motions were made and no votes were taken.

MOTION by Mr. Zwolenski, seconded by Mr. Keeley, and voted unanimously on an aye vote to adjourn at 9:13 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra A. Todd, Town Clerk